UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.3145
3 December 1992

ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 3 December 1992, at 5.30 p.m.

President:	Mr. GHAREKHAN	(India)
Members:	Austria	Mr. HOHENFELLNER
	Belgium	Mr. NOTERDAEME
	Cape Verde	Mr. BARBOSA
	China	Mr. LI Daoyu
	Ecuador	Mr. AYALA LASSO
	France	Mr. MERIMEE
	Hungary	Mr. ERDOS
	Japan	Mr. HATANO
	Morocco	Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mr. PERKINS
	Venezuela	Mr. ARRIA
	Zimbabwe	Mr. MUMBENGEGWI

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The meeting was called to order at 5.50 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of December, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a sincere tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. André Erdös, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, for his services as President of the Security Council for the month of November 1992. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing our deep appreciation to Ambassador Erdös for the great diplomatic skill and unfailing courtesy with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA

LETTER DATED 24 NOVEMBER 1992 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/24859)

LETTER DATED 29 NOVEMBER 1992 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/24868)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Somalia, in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Hassan (Somalia) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them letters dated 24 and 29 November 1992, respectively, from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, documents S/24859 and S/24868. Members of the Council also have before them document S/24880, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following other documents: S/24867, letter dated 27 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/24878, letter dated 1 December 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/24883, letter dated 2 December 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that that is the case.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Before putting the draft resolution to the vote, I shall call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. Your proven diplomatic skills and wide experience augur

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

well for the coming month. The fact that this Council is ready to take this momentous decision within hours of your assumption of office is testimony to your leadership. Allow me also to join you in thanking Ambassador Erdös of Hungary for the very able and effective manner in which he guided the Council's business during the very busy month of November.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the assiduous manner in which he has treated the tragic question of Somalia since he assumed office. In particular, we are grateful for the promptness, indeed urgency, with which he has brought to the attention of the Security Council the grave and tragic dimensions the problem of Somalia has recently assumed. We greatly appreciate the lucid and incisive manner in which he has presented the possible options to the Council. It is the clarity of his reporting and recommendatory style that has enabled the Council to reach a decision so rapidly.

My delegation has followed with increasing horror the fratricidal tragedy that has continued to spiral in Somalia. We are gravely concerned at its horrendous humanitarian dimensions and we agree with the Secretary-General that we cannot countenance this untold suffering of innocent men, women and children from starvation and famine. Particularly unacceptable is the fact that humanitarian assistance is available but cannot reach its intended recipients simply because it is being hijacked, stolen or otherwise obstructed by warlords, armed gangs and bandits. Patient negotiations by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General over a long period of time have shown that the humanitarian imperatives of the Somali crisis cannot be met through conventional methods. The various faction leaders have, for reasons best known to themselves, displayed varying degrees of indifference to the suffering of their own people. Efforts at negotiation have been characterized by intransigence and uncooperativeness. Even where cooperation was deemed to have been secured, there was never any guarantee that the faction leaders did in fact control the territory they claimed was under their jurisdiction.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

It is those considerations that have convinced my delegation that the question of Somalia is a unique situation that warrants a unique approach. However, any unique situation and the unique solution adopted create of necessity a precedent against which future, similar situations will be measured. Since the situation in Somalia is the first of its kind to be addressed by the Council, it is essential that it be handled correctly.

It is Zimbabwe's view that the situation in Somalia is both humanitarian and political. The two dimensions are so inextricably interrelated that it would be futile to try to extricate them. This means, therefore, that the manner in which one is handled must affect the other.

Thus, the political and humanitarian problems of Somalia cannot be addressed in the context of one Member State or a group of Member States. They have to be handled in the context of the international community. Of course, in this new era - the post-cold-war era - it is not unreasonable to expect individual States or a group of States to provide the necessary resources, both human and material, to help resolve such a tragic crisis as part of the international effort.

An effort can be construed as international only if the United Nations is at its centre. It is therefore in this context that my delegation welcomes the draft resolution before us in document S/24880. This draft resolution, which we are about to adopt, places the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the controlling centre of the operation.

Zimbabwe attaches a lot of importance to the idea that in any international enforcement action the United Nations must define the mandate; the United Nations must monitor and supervise its implementation; and the United Nations must determine when the mandate has been fulfilled. My

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

delegation is happy that the draft resolution before us meets these very important requirements. This sets an important precedent for future operations under equally unique circumstances.

My delegation cannot fail to put on record its appreciation to those Member States that have risen to the desperate humanitarian call from Somalia by volunteering to the United Nations both human and material resources to assist in establishing an environment conducive to the successful and effective delivery of humanitarian relief in Somalia.

This is an important and a necessary step if national reconciliation and national reconstruction are to be achieved. Needless to say, in the final analysis it is the people of Somalia who bear the responsibility to achieve national reconciliation and reconstruction in their country. The international community can only assist in the process.

It is our hope that the people of Somalia, particularly those wielding arms, will seize upon this offered opportunity to make a new start by fully cooperating with the United Nations effort so that the necessary conditions for peace and reconciliation are created as expeditiously as possible. They owe it not only to the present, starving generation, but also to future generations of Somalis.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Zimbabwe for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, on having taken over the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. In the first three days of the month you have amply demonstrated your skill and efficiency. We wish you every success in your work, and assure you of our fullest cooperation to that end.

The way in which Ambassador Erdös of Hungary steered the work of the Security Council during the month of November earned the gratitude and recognition of us all.

Ecuador will be voting in favour of the draft resolution in document S/24880, for the following reasons.

First, the civilized conscience of mankind has been watching with bafflement and anguish how the Somali population, exposed to the rigours of hunger, is gradually dying off while the political factions at war in the country - sometimes recognizable, and in other cases so fragmented as to constitute unled and uncontrolled bandits - have been blocking the international humanitarian assistance provided by groups of countries or by international organizations.

The tragedy of the Somali people comes before us daily on our television screens with resounding eloquence. Solidarity and interdependence - principles that underly our international order - do not permit us to remain impassive in the face of human tragedy, regardless of where it may occur. Ecuador wants to live up to its moral responsibilities to this Organization and, as a member of the Security Council, feels obliged to contribute to a settlement of the Somali conflict.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Secondly, since January this year the Security Council has been adopting resolutions designed to facilitate the distribution of humanitarian assistance to the Somali population. Five resolutions have been adopted, and Ecuador has voted in favour of all of them. Unfortunately, none of them separately nor all of them together have been sufficient to resolve the crisis, despite the great efforts made by humanitarian organizations, properly coordinated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, despite the generous contributions made by many countries, and despite the heroic activities of the participants in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), to whose Governments Ecuador wishes to pay a tribute of respect and gratitude.

The political intemperance of the leaders of the groups and factions and vandalism - vandalism that has affected more than 80 per cent of the humanitarian assistance, which has then been converted into currency for the purpose of obtaining political power and purchasing weapons - have created insurmountable obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people that is in such need of it.

In order to remedy this situation it has become essential, as is recognized by the Secretary-General in the last paragraph of his letter of 24 November (S/24859), to review the basic premises and principles upon which United Nations action in Somalia is based.

Thirdly, the Somali crisis is an exceptional one, so much so that it requires a fresh kind of analysis: political as well as legal. This has been very intelligently demonstrated by the Secretary-General in his letters of 24 and 29 November - documents S/24859 and S/24868 - and in his additional verbal analyses and submissions to the Council. As is stated in the draft resolution, the situation in Somalia has reached the point where it constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Fourthly, Somalia is a country without a Government, without any responsible authority, without any valid national principles. While the warlords fight among themselves and seize for their own gain the humanitarian assistance provided by the international community, the world sees a flood of television images of starving and dying women and children, of men watching helplessly as their families die around them. They appeal to us to act effectively and quickly.

In Somalia there is no Goverment that can be the interlocutor of the United Nations for the purpose of agreeing upon a humanitarian-assistance operation. But the Somali people - solely sovereign in respect of its destiny - is our interlocutor, and we are heeding its call.

Fifthly, the operation that we are going to adopt will have a defined and limited objective, which is the promotion of a secure environment that will make it possible for humanitarian-assistance operations in Somalia to be carried out. The Secretary-General and the States lending troops to make feasible the implementation of this draft resolution will be authorized to take all necessary measures to this end.

Furthermore, the Secretary-General will establish a liaison office for the operation in Somalia and will report to the Security Council when, in his opinion, the envisaged objective has been fulfilled. The first report will come to the Council within two weeks, and then the office will report as necessary to keep the Council fully informed on the progress of the operation. To that end, it may even be possible to send missions to Somalia.

All of this, in Ecuador's view, recognizes the fundamental role of the United Nations in political analysis and scrutiny, in that the Security

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Council is the body that will authorize start-up, continued execution and termination. Moreover, the unified command and control of the military forces will be subject to arrangements between the Secretary-General and the Member States contributing contingents. Those arrangements will reflect the reality of the contributors' participation.

On this point, I wish to pay particular tribute to those countries that have announced that they are ready to provide the troops that will make this operation possible. The regional organizations that have requested the operation, the international community that has been hoping for it and the Somali people that so much needs it can never forget the sensitivity and the generosity of these countries.

The first positive effects of the operation have already been seen. Even before its beginning, the leaders of two of the strongest Somali factions have stated that they will welcome the troops entrusted with the task of carrying it out.

The decision that we are about to take is unquestionably an important one. It is a response under Chapter VII of the Charter that the Council wishes to give, commensurate to the complex and sui generis situation that besets Somalia. We hope that, in adopting this draft resolution, the Security Council will be fulfilling its ineluctable responsibilities in a timely and effective manner. This operation will alleviate the suffering of the Somali people and will create conditions conducive to the reconciliation and reconstruction that are both their right and their duty.

We appeal to the leaders of the factions and parties in Somalia to understand the seriousness of their duties and to cooperate with the operation that we are about to initiate and then to act in the most responsible manner to promote reconciliation and reconstruction in their country.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

Once this draft resolution has been adopted, hope will be reborn in the minds of the suffering people of Somalia - hope that, at the moment, is seen through the blue of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ecuador for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. LI Daoyu (China) (interpretation from Chinese): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. I am confident that with your resourcefulness, talent and rich diplomatic experience, the Security Council will successfully complete its tasks for this month.

I also wish to thank Ambassador Erdös, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, for the tireless and widely appreciated efforts he made when he presided over the Security Council in November.

The rapid deterioration of the situation in Somalia has aroused grave concern in the international community. The protracted conflicts and wars have inflicted huge losses of material, property and life upon the Somali people. Recently, the humanitarian relief effort has been subjected to repeated violent attacks and is literally paralysed by the further worsening of the situation in Somalia. As a result, ships carrying relief supplies cannot reach ports in safety, and the goods that have arrived at ports cannot be delivered safely. The number of casualties is increasing at an astonishing rate. The Chinese delegation is therefore deeply concerned and worried about this state of affairs.

The Chinese delegation agrees with the analysis of the Somali situation made by the Secretary-General in his letter addressed to the President of the Security Council. We support the efforts to find ways by which the Somali crisis could be settled within the framework of the United Nations. Taking into account the long-term chaotic situation resulting from the present lack of a Government in Somalia, and in view of our deep sympathy with the Somali people in their anguish, we endorse the requests of most African countries and the recommendations of the Secretary-General, that is, that the United Nations

(Mr. Li Daoyu, China)

should take prompt, strong and exceptional measures for the settlement of the Somali crisis. We have noted that the draft resolution to be voted upon reflects, to a certain extent, the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the concern of most countries, and incorporates some reasonable opinions expressed my many delegations, including the Chinese delegation, regarding such issues as the strengthening of United Nations control over the operation to be carried out by the countries concerned. Therefore, the Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution. However, we wish to point out that, in spite of the fact that the Secretary-General has been given some authorization, the draft resolution has taken the form of authorizing certain countries to take military actions, which may adversely affect the collective role of the United Nations. We hereby express our reservations on this.

With regard to the Somali situation, we hold that, in the long term, only through dialogue and consultation between the parties concerned can national reconciliation be achieved, disputes genuinely resolved and enduring peace and stability achieved in Somalia. As we understand it, according to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, the military operation authorized by the draft resolution is an exceptional action in view of the unique situation in Somalia, and its purpose is to create promptly a secure environment in a short period of time for the humanitarian relief effort in Somalia. Once such an environment is created, the military operation should cease. Meanwhile, we maintain that the Security Council and the Secretary-General should be empowered to take decisions with regard to the control and duration of such an operation.

The Chinese delegation deeply sympathizes with the Somali people in

(Mr. Li Daoyu, China)

their abyss of suffering. We hope that all parties concerned in Somalia will cooperate with the United Nations and international humanitarian relief agencies, cease fire immediately and restore law and order so as to ensure the smooth conduct of the relief endeavours and alleviate the suffering of the Somali people. Furthermore, we sincerely hope that the various Somali parties will put the interest of the Somali people and regional peace and security first, find peaceful solutions through dialogue and consultation and achieve national reconciliation, peace and stability at an early date.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. BARBOSA (Cape Verde) (interpretation from French): It is a cause of great satisfaction to the Cape Verdean delegation to see India guiding the work of the Security Council for the month of December. I am confident that under your skilled and experienced leadership we will be able to tackle successfully the very large number of difficult tasks that lie before us.

I wish also, Sir, to convey to your predecessor, Ambassador Erdös of Hungary, the great appreciation and gratitude of my delegation for the excellent way in which he conducted our work last month.

Cape Verde has always taken the view that the national conflict in Somalia has reached a level of destruction comparable to that of the most ferocious international conflicts, necessitating resolute and effective action on the part of the international community with a view to putting an end to the tragedy afflicting the Somali people.

In this regard, we have supported all United Nations endeavours to secure the cooperation of the various Somali factions for the implementation of a

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

peace plan whose purpose is to secure a cease-fire and bring about a cessation of hostilities, provide humanitarian assistance to the population and create conditions conducive to a political settlement of the crisis in the country, as well as conditions favourable to national reconstruction.

Despite all these endeavours, we are bound to admit that we have now reached a situation in which the law of the jungle is tending to prevail over the action of the international community.

What is occurring in Somalia is a threat to the very existence of Somali society; but at the same time it represents one of the most serious challenges to the full establishment of a new international order on Earth within which the United Nations has a role of capital importance to play.

Moreover, we have no doubt that the national conflict has a second dimension - an international dimension - in view of the fact that, because of its repercussions on neighbouring States, it is imperilling the stability and security of the whole region.

My country therefore fully concurs with the assessment of the Secretary-General - whose efforts we greatly value - that the situation in Somalia has become intolerable, for existing circumstances do not permit effective execution of the peace-keeping operation, necessitating forceful action on the part of the international community to restore order, disarm the warmongers and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the population. Such an operation will be a very important and urgently needed step towards solving the Somali problem, if we wish to assist in creating a favourable climate in which the Somali people will be able to begin to resolve its political problems and repair the country's economy.

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

The United Nations Charter gives this Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We take the view that, during these last few years, the Council has succeeded in acting correctly and effectively in discharging all its responsibilities in the field of international security. As a result, the hopes of all the peoples of the world are focused on the United Nations and on this Council in particular, which is increasingly being perceived as a guarantor of peace, international legality and the territorial integrity of States.

This renewed confidence must be nurtured if we want to preserve the credibility of the Council and of the United Nations. Thus, we must show imagination and determination in order to ensure that all the decisions taken by this Council are respected and implemented. The case of Somalia offers us a golden opportunity to prove our determination, and this, moreover, besides helping solve the calamitous situation in which the Somali people find themselves, would contribute to giving fresh impetus to United Nations activities in maintaining international peace and security.

That is why my country will vote in favour of the draft resolution now before us.

I should like to take this occasion to express to the Council my Government's gratitude to all the States that have generously offered to make available large military forces for the operation planned in the draft resolution before the Council.

We hope that all the parties, movements and factions in Somalia will, as provided for in the draft resolution, take all the necessary steps to facilitate the efforts of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the humanitarian organizations so that emergency humanitarian assistance can be

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

provided to the affected Somali population. Furthermore, we expect them to take all necessary steps to guarantee the safety of the personnel involved in the humanitarian assistance operation.

I should like to highlight once again the role of the international humanitarian organizations, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross, in coming to the aid of the affected populations. My Government considers this humanitarian action very valuable.

In order for peace and security to be established once and for all in Somalia, any international action, and that of this Council in particular, must be capable of tackling and eliminating the underlying causes of the conflict. In this respect, while we recognize the primary responsibility of the Somali people with regard to national reconciliation and the reconstruction of their country, we wish once again to voice our strongest encouragement to the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative along these lines, which they have carried out in coordination with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League.

In conclusion, I should also like to express the gratitude of the Cape Verdean delegation at seeing the Council taking into consideration the important proposal made at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly by the President of the Senegal and Chairman of the OAU, His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf, regarding the convening of an international conference on Somalia under United Nations auspices.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cape Verde for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) (interpretation from French): First of all, allow me, Sir, to extend to you my congratulations on your taking up the presidency of the Council for the month of December. My delegation is encouraged to know that, during its last month as a Council member, our work will be guided by a wise and effective President. I should also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Erdös, for the way in which he steered our work during a busy and difficult month.

For many long months now, we have become sadly used to receiving tragic news from Somalia. But this tragedy has become intolerable now that it has become evident that, despite the efforts of the international community, destitution and famine continue to prevail in that country. Warlords, bandits and unscrupulous traders are in effect preventing humanitarian assistance reaching those that need it. Despite the devotion of the humanitarian aid workers and the patience shown by the representatives of the United Nations, this aberrant and irresponsible behaviour has gradually become an insurmountable obstacle. It has gone on far too long. What is now at stake is the very survival of the Somali people.

My delegation, which has been waiting for the green light from the Secretary-General for some weeks now for it to participate in the United Nations Operation in Somalia, is in a good position to note that the approach adopted so far by the international community, and by our Council in particular, has proved ineffective. In this respect, Belgium has come to the same conclusion as the Secretary-General.

We must therefore make a fresh start in meeting the humanitarian challenge in Somalia by taking into account the atypical situation there: it is a country without a government, without an administration, with no source

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

of authority, where factions and gangs hold sway. The Secretary-General has submitted some innovative proposals to the Council in the draft resolution before us, and Belgium wishes to place on record its agreement with those proposals.

Of course, Belgium would have preferred this to be a purely United Nations operation, as in the fifth option proposed by the Secretary-General in his letter to the Council (S/24868). Nevertheless, in view of the arguments adduced by the Secretary-General, Belgium can go along with the fourth option, which would be an enforcement operation undertaken by a group of Member States and duly authorized by the Council. We were particularly pleased to concur with this since we find in the draft resolution a number of elements on which we are particularly keen and which significantly narrow the distance between the two options I have just mentioned.

First, the purpose of the operation is clearly a humanitarian one: in the short term, its purpose is to ensure that assistance is distributed safely and effectively and, in the longer term, to promote national reconciliation and reconstruction in Somalia. To achieve this, the necessary means must be provided; these should, nevertheless, remain commensurate with the goals our Organization has set itself. The operation must also be given enough time to achieve these goals.

Second, the draft resolution makes it quite clear that the operation in Somalia will be under the political control of the United Nations. The coordinating machinery to be set up between the States participating in the operation and the Secretary-General, and the decision-making powers granted to the Council concerning the duration of the operation, are, in my delegation's opinion, key elements in this draft resolution.

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

For these reasons, Belgium will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us, and fervently hopes that the new operation the Council is to launch today will at last make it possible to put an end to the suffering of the Somali people.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Belgium for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to welcome you, Sir, to the post of President of the Council and also to express our gratitude to your predecessor, the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Erdös, for the excellent way in which he guided the complicated work of the Council last month.

The Russian delegation would like to make the following statement before the draft resolution is adopted.

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

The Russian Federation has learned with deep concern of the further deterioration of the crisis in Somalia and of the obstacles to its settlement and to the provision of much-needed humanitarian assistance to the starving population. The situation in Somalia is one of total chaos, fraught with the real threat that the country could disintegrate. Millions of Somalis are now on the brink of death from starvation. Children are particularly hard hit. According to some sources, there is a danger that by the end of this year not a single child under the age of five will be left in Somalia.

The considerable efforts made by the international community have unfortunately failed thus far to yield the needed results. The emergency international assistance being supplied to the country has been looted by bandit gangs, so that practically none of it is reaching the starving population. The safety of the staff of humanitarian organizations is seriously threatened. Obviously, under such circumstances, it is essential that additional and urgent steps should be taken by the United Nations and the international community as a whole. As was rightly stressed by the Secretary-General in his letter dated 29 November 1992:

> "the Security Council now has no alternative but to decide to adopt more forceful measures to secure the humanitarian operations in Somalia." (S/24868, p. 3)

The Russian delegation is convinced that at the present juncture, resolution of the crisis requires the use of international armed forces under the auspices of the Security Council to ensure the delivery and safe keeping of the humanitarian assistance and its distribution to the country's starving population.

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

The fulfilment of the international community's obligations to put an end to the human tragedy in that country must be made more effective through united action to achieve that goal. That is the purpose of the Security Council's request to all States, in particular those in the region, to provide appropriate support for the actions undertaken to implement relevant Security Council decisions with respect to Somalia, including the draft resolution we are about to adopt today.

The Russian Federation, for its part, is prepared to cooperate with the United Nations, with all States, and also as a part of regional efforts, to effect a speedy settlement of the tragic situation in Somalia, to restore peace, stability, law and order there, in order to create the conditions necessary for ensuring the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance and for bringing about national reconciliation and political settlement in that country.

The Russian Federation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/24880.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to me.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/24880.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Austria, Belgium, Cape Verde, China, Ecuador, France, Hungary, India, Japan, Morocco, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Zimbabwe

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 794 (1992).

I shall now call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. MERIMEE (France) (interpretation from French): It is a great pleasure to extend to you, Mr. President, the congratulations of the French delegation upon your assumption of your office and to thank the Ambassador of Hungary for the manner in which he guided the Council's proceedings last month.

The situation in Somalia has continued to worsen in recent days, notwithstanding the efforts by the international community, and particularly by the United Nations, to bring relief to the people of that country. Owing to the insecurity caused by the continuing confrontations between Somali factions and the acts of violence committed by the large number of armed, uncontrolled groups, only a fraction of the humanitarian assistance actually reaches those who desperately need it, and the number of victims is constantly increasing. The international community has, however, given outstanding humanitarian assistance to Somalia, and France has spared no efforts, both in terms of substantial food assistance and by the establishment of a daily airlift.

Unfortunately, that mobilization has not been enough. The measures adopted by the Security Council to make it possible for international assistance to be delivered have not led to the attainment of that goal. With regard in particular to the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), its contingents have not yet been deployed in most of the regions where their presence had been envisaged, owing to a lack of cooperation on the part of the Somali parties. Where they have been deployed, personnel of the Operation, to

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

whom we wish to pay a tribute, are encountering major difficulties in carrying out their mandate.

Given the intolerable situation prevailing in Somalia, the international community must react vigorously. In this connection the French Government expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the letter he addressed to members of the Security Council and for the guidelines he suggested therein. We also welcome the offer by the United States Government, which will make possible a broad-scale international operation to establish, in a lasting manner, conditions in which humanitarian assistance can be delivered without hindrance.

In adopting resolution 794 (1992) on the basis of the Secretary-General's report, which envisages action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has demonstrated its determination to put an end to the suffering of the Somalis. We consider this decision, reached after very careful consideration, to be of major importance. For us, the commitment is part of the principle of establishing access to victims and of the right to emergency humanitarian assistance, which my country has so often stressed in recent years. Thus, the President of the French Republic has decided that France will make a substantial contribution to this operation.

The operation that will now begin, with the assistance of a number of Member States, will be carried out in close liaison with the United Nations and clearly as part of the Organization's humanitarian and political sphere of action. Thus, the role devolving upon the Secretary-General throughout the operation, in terms of its establishment, its follow-through and its implementation through UNOSOM - which will eventually take it over - is essential. Similarly, we are pleased that the resolution provides for regular

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

reports to the Security Council, not only by the Secretary-General but also by an ad hoc commission composed of some Council members.

No one will be surprised that, given the unprecedented situation prevailing in Somalia, the Council has at this stage determined upon an approach different from the usual form of peace-keeping operations. By this resolution the United Nations has demonstrated its capacity to adapt to new challenges and is acting directly in line with the proposals put forward in the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace".

We hope that the Somali parties and all who possess weapons in Somalia will take due note of the international community's determination and that they will choose to cooperate in ensuring that the humanitarian goal of our action may be achieved without resort to force. However, it is always possible that such force may be required, and that is why the resolution makes reference to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Mérimée, France)

Finally, in tandem with United Nations intervention and humanitarian action, France appeals to the international community, and above all to the States of the region and to the African States, to work together for a political settlement in Somalia and for the re-establishment of a State, which requires national reconcilation. France will cooperate in any initiative along those lines. France expects boldness and imagination from the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): The magnitude of the human catastrophe in Somalia defies words and imagination. As the Secretary-General pointed out to the Security Council on 25 November, the time has come to take drastic steps forward. The international community cannot tolerate its efforts to provide relief to the starving population in Somalia being constantly thwarted by armed factions and marauding gangs. It cannot stand by and passively watch humanitarian goods being looted, aircraft and ships bringing in relief supplies being attacked, and United Nations personnel and peace-keepers being threatened.

Sharing the Secretary-General's assessment that the situation in Somalia is intolerable and that it has become necessary to review the basic premises and principles of the United Nations effort in Somalia, the Security Council has now taken a more determined approach under Chapter VII of the Charter. By doing so, the Council is fulfilling its responsibility towards the afflicted population in Somalia and in acting upon its claim on international solidarity. This bold new step is also a further development of steps the Council has taken in recent times in its resolutions 678 (1990), 688 (1991) and 770 (1992).

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

On 3 April 1991, one of the first occasions on which I spoke in this Council, I mentioned possible lessons from the Gulf conflict and the United Nations response. One suggestion was to look more closely into possible "fine print" for enforcement action under the auspices of the United Nations. While this was never done in a systematic way, today's resolution advances in a pragmatic manner a number of important elements. I am referring here in particular to the provisions regarding the Secretary-General's role in the use of all necessary means and in making the necessary arrangements for the unified command and control of the forces involved, and to the appointment of an ad hoc commission of the Council, the creation of a liaison staff, and improved reporting requirements. In this respect, we have come a long way since then. Another possible lesson which I mentioned then - the enhancement of the preventive role of the United Nations - has not yet been adequately translated into action. Much more remains to be done in this regard.

In conclusion, I should like to draw an obvious parallel. In his report to the Security Council of 21 July 1992 on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Secretary-General expressed his concern that the concentration of the attention of the Council on Yugoslav problems:

> "will be at the expense of the Organization's ability to help resolve equally cruel and dangerous conflicts elsewhere, e.g. in Somalia". (S/24333, para. 13)

Today we are addressing the conflict in Somalia in a decisive manner. Our action clearly demonstrates that we can muster the necessary political will and the resources required to deal with humanitarian disasters and the need for quick and secure delivery of humanitarian assistance. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, this need continues to exist and is indeed growing. It is our fervent hope that it will soon be addressed effectively as well.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of this Council and to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Erdös, for the great work he did last month.

The world has followed with dismay the appalling human tragedy of Somalia, where the lives of millions of people are threatened and over 700,000 refugees have fled the country. People are dying of famine in horrifying numbers daily, often within a short distance of supplies of food and humanitarian assistance.

The problem in Somalia has not been a lack of generosity on the part of the international community in providing humanitarian relief. The European Community has committed over 200,000 tons of food aid to Somalia this year, worth over 56 million ECU, and has also contributed non-food assistance to the value of 38 million ECU. The European Community has thus contributed substantially more than any other donor to Somalia, and that is not counting the large amounts of assistance additionally provided by its member States. The United Kingdom itself has now pledged £27 million in humanitarian assistance to Somalia.

But the problem has been the lack of security within Somalia, which has prevented food reaching those who are starving. Only last week, a British-owned vessel carrying 10,000 tons of food aid was fired on by one of the local militias as it tried to enter Mogadishu harbour and was forced as a result to return to Mombasa with an unexploded shell lodged in the hold among its cargo of food. In his letter of 24 November (S/24859) the Secretary-General reports increased hijackings of aid vehicles, lootings of warehouses and detention of expatriate relief personnel. He says that the looting of humanitarian supplies has become the basis for an otherwise

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

non-existent Somali economy. The juxtaposition of such behaviour with the starvation of many thousands of people is quite intolerable.

Food and security have thus become inextricably linked in the present situation in Somalia, and increased security is the key to dealing effectively with the humanitarian crisis. This Council has tried since the beginning of this year to do just that. Five Security Council resolutions bear testimony to those efforts. But we have to accept that we have not so far succeeded, that a turning-point has now been reached and that an entirely new approach is needed. We fully share the Secretary-General's analysis that action under Chapter VII of the Charter has to be taken to establish a secure environment for the distribution of humanitarian relief. We believe that, having tried everything else over the past year, we have no other option if we are to feed the starving in Somalia. We warmly welcome the generosity of the Government of the United States, which has offered to make available very substantial resources to achieve this objective.

The overriding concern must be for those Somalis most at risk in the centre and south of the country. We applaud the efforts and bravery of the staff of the United Nations agencies and of non-governmental organizations, which have been operating in extremely difficult circumstances. It will be essential that the United Nations and the unified command deal effectively and forcefully with the elements that have hitherto obstructed the United Nations relief effort. We must not forget, however, those parts of the country which have not been so affected by looting and anarchy but where the need for international assistance is still very real. They also require the sustained attention and support of the international community. We attach importance to the continuing mandate for the United Nations Operation in Somalia to operate

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

in those regions where security conditions permit and the consent of the parties has been obtained.

The resolution we have just adopted also gives encouragement to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to continue their efforts to achieve political reconciliation in Somalia and to help the Somali people rebuild the civil administration of their country. We continue to see wisdom in the strategy set out in the Secretary-General's report of 22 July, with its focus on re-establishing Somali society at the local and regional levels so as to produce a sound framework for national reconciliation and rehabilitation.

The United Nations donor relief conference has begun today in Addis Ababa. It is important that the message go out to the Somali representatives attending that conference that the international community has no wish to intervene in the internal affairs of their country, but that it cannot stand by and permit a humanitarian crisis of this magnitude to continue. This is indeed a unique set of circumstances which requires special measures.

To sum up, we strongly support and will continue to support the efforts to improve security, to step up the delivery of relief supplies, to strengthen the coordination of the relief operation and to tackle the underlying political causes of the humanitarian tragedy in Somalia. The resolution just adopted represents, in the view of my delegation, a vital step towards achieving those objectives.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. PERKINS (United States of America): On behalf of my delegation, I should like, Sir, to express my congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of December. You will have our fullest cooperation during this time.

Also, my thanks go to Ambassador Erdös for his very wise leadership during the month of November and for the great amount of work done.

The vote of the United States for the resolution before us expresses our commitment to resolving the human tragedy in Somalia - a crisis of immense, almost indescribable proportions. The measures authorized by the resolution and supported by my Government have one objective: to achieve a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief to the Somali people in the areas of greatest need. While the resolution authorizes the use of "all necessary means" (S/24880, para. 10), one point should be clear: our mission is essentially a peaceful one, and we will endorse the use of force only if and when we decide it is necessary to accomplish our objective.

By acting in response to the tragic events in Somalia, the international community is also taking an important step in developing a strategy for dealing with the potential disorder and conflicts of the post-cold-war world. This step must entail unprecedented levels of cooperation amongst the international community in response to urgent humanitarian needs and to peace-keeping, utilizing our respective military forces, if necessary, to do so. Cooperation will have to occur on a case-by-case basis, given the complexity of the post-cold-war order.

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

Such a step will also entail unambiguous support of the United Nations in enabling it to confront challenges to international peace and stability.

In offering to contribute to the effort authorized by this resolution, the United States has no other objective. Once deployed, our military forces will remain in Somalia no longer than is necessary. We look forward to the early transition to an effective United Nations peace-keeping force. The sooner outside military forces can develop a secure environment, the sooner the Somali people can begin to reconstruct their own society. Military intervention is no substitute for political reconciliation, and that task belongs firmly in the hands of Somalis.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the various specialized United Nations agencies working in Somalia, and United Nations Special Representative for Somalia Ambassador Ismat Kittani, who is now in Addis Ababa meeting with Somali representatives, have been working with tremendous dedication to provide relief to those in need. The international relief agencies and a multitude of private voluntary organizations have been at the forefront of a truly international effort to help the inhabitants of a country being ripped asunder by violence. We pay tribute to them all. We want to be at their side as partners in a humanitarian effort.

The task before the world community is challenging. Relief must be followed closely by rehabilitation and by reconstruction. The international community needs to be generous in its contributions - military, logistic and financial - to this great humanitarian enterprise.

The United Nations and the world community may offer advice or assistance to the Somalis as they heal the wounds from years of bitter conflict. But it

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

is for the Somali people to decide their own future. The secure environment that we will establish - and this endeavour must and will succeed - will allow Somalis to devise their own formula for reconciliation.

By acting today to provide a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian relief to the people of Somalia, the Council has once again taken an essential step to restore international peace and security. Much else remains to be done by the Somali people with the assistance of many agencies. The most obvious beneficiaries will be the innocent victims of anarchy and famine. Moreover, this courageous decision by the Security Council strengthens the United Nations and affirms the ideals upon which it is based.

The international community in the post-cold-war era is already being confronted with problems which are distinctly different from the threat that hung over us for the past 45 years. There can be no simple solution to these problems.

But in the case of Somalia, and in other cases we are sure to face in the future, it is important that we send this unambiguous message: the international community has the intent and will to act decisively regarding peace-keeping problems that threaten international stability.

The post-cold-war world is likely to hold other Somalias in store for us. The world will seek solutions that can be found only by nations banding together, led by the United Nations. In these endeavours you will be able to count on the support of the United States. We must be prepared to respond - together - to solve the great moral and humanitarian challenges that lie ahead.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. ARRIA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a special pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over the Council this month, coinciding with the completion of your great nation's current term in the Security Council, where you represent it with the brilliance and sensitivity we admire and respect.

We are also pleased to join in the expressions of appreciation to Ambassador André Erdös of Hungary, who led us through our complex and busy work schedule in November with effectiveness and talent.

Thanks to the objective report of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, which set out precisely, clearly and responsibly the ways and means of confronting the tragedy of Somalia, today the Security Council was able to take a historic decision only three days after the report had been submitted.

The decision we have just taken is an attempt to respond to an extraordinary humanitarian emergency with equally extraordinary measures. This year the Council has adopted five resolutions in an effort to provide, progressively, negotiated solutions to the Somali civil conflict and ensure that Somalia's grave humanitarian situation receives the attention it deserves.

Nevertheless, despite efforts to mediate a cease-fire; despite the imposition of an arms and military-equipment embargo; despite a United Nations operation, an airlift, the humanitarian activities of authorized intergovernmental bodies and the noble efforts of a great number of non-governmental organizations; and despite the political efforts of regional organizations, the situation has gradually and tragically worsened, with the end result that the current state of affairs in Somalia constitutes an affront to the dignity and conscience of the international community.

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

The Council was confident that it was possible to act in a conventional manner. This has not been the case, and no longer can we dispute the Secretary-General's judgement that there is no national authority in Somalia. We have reached a critical point in a historical process characterized by external interference of all kinds and by fratricidal conflicts, which have not just deprived the Somali people of their right to peace and development but, as we have heard today, practically deprived them of their right to life.

Somalia - a nation in the Horn of Africa for more than 1,000 years - has never experienced circumstances such as those that it has seen over the past few years. The tragedy is the result of two decades of dictatorship and civil war, which have led to the collapse of all civil and political structures and to tribalization and rampant vandalism.

In the 1970s, incredible though it may seem, this impoverished land had the largest mechanized military force in sub-Saharan Africa; yet during that period about 5 million Somalis were threatened with starvation. Two hundred years before the discovery of America, Mogadishu, which is today in ruins, was one of the main commercial centres in that part of Africa. It had a system of government and justice that was admired throughout the region.

Never before has the international community been faced with such a political and moral dilemma. My country has no doubt that the situation requires exceptional measures. All the values and purposes of our Organization would have been without any foundation if we had not taken this decision. The resolution is aimed at meeting an urgent need: creating the necessary conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout Somalia. This is no easy task, and, as recent experience has shown, it is not without risk.

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

Venezuela, as it fully endorses this objective, wishes to pay a special tribute to those Governments that will so generously make their national forces and their resources available for the purpose of achieving this noble goal, in particular, the Government of the United States which took the initiative in this area.

Having got to this stage, my country reiterates its view that the crisis in Somalia will be resolved in a stable and final manner only if that nation, which has special ethnic, religious and cultural circumstances, recognizes the need for its own reconciliation. As the resolution says, the international community, through the Secretary-General, will continue to make efforts to help bring about a political settlement.

The future of Somalia is intimately connected with the political circumstances of the countries of the so-called Horn of Africa; hence the search for machinery to establish regional stability must be uppermost in our minds as we undertake future action. The international community will no longer be able to watch unresponsively the slow death of the Somali people. Thanks to the sensitivity and the concern of the world's media, the plight of the Somali people has always weighed heavily on the conscience of mankind, which today is acting through the Security Council.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Venezuela for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): May I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I know that you will guide our deliberations in an efficient and effective manner.

I wish also to thank Ambassador Erdös of Hungary for guiding us during the busy month of November.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

Japan is deeply concerned about the appalling situation in Somalia. International efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people in need are impeded and repeatedly attacked. The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) has not been able to function effectively. The situation demands that urgent and effective action be taken to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia.

In the circumstances, Japan welcomes and pays tribute to the initiative of the United States to meet this challenge, and we support the new operation stipulated in the resolution that has just been adopted. It is important that close cooperation and coordination be maintained between the United Nations and the new military operation and that the Security Council be kept fully informed of the implementation of the resolution.

The resolution states that:

"the people of Somalia bear ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation and the reconstruction of their own country". (fifteenth preambular paragraph)

The international community is ready to help. Japan has contributed to the humanitarian assistance activities in Somalia and will continue to contribute. But I must say that, in the final analysis, that it is the various parties in Somalia - the various clans, the various factions and the people of Somalia - that will have to help themselves.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco) (interpretation from French): May I, first, extend warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. Knowing your

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

personal talents, diplomatic ability and sense of duty, we are convinced that, under your guidance, the Security Council will effectively discharge the difficult and important tasks before it this month. You can be assured of the total cooperation of my delegation.

I should like also to thank Ambassador Erdös of Hungary for the effective and skilful manner in which he directed the work of the Council last month.

My country is following with great anxiety the constantly worsening situation in Somalia and the continuing violence fanned by lawless warlords. This poses a real threat for the Horn of Africa, a region already suffering from famine, civil wars and massive refugee flows. Hence it is also a threat to international peace and security.

In this unprecedented situation the Security Council became the only hope of saving thousands of old people, women and children, whose everyday suffering is hard to describe but the horrific pictures we receive daily of this tragedy have aroused the universal conscience. The international community and the United Nations in particular have already made sustained efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Somali population. But the extremely tragic situation in that brotherly country requires speedy and energetic action commensurate with the disastrous situation in that country. Therefore, the Kingdom of Morocco can only welcome the unshakeable desire of our Council to act without further delay to put an end to the chaos and create the security conditions necessary for the provision of humanitarian assistance to the afflicted population throughout Somalia.

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his lucid and relevant analysis of the Somali tragedy and is gratified that the options proposed in his letter of 29 November to the Security Council have given rise to serious and responsible debate aimed at securing speedy and effective action.

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

The Secretary-General's innovative approach deserves our full support. An extraordinary situation requires an exceptional response. There is no alternative but to launch a large-scale operation within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, in order to restore a situation that is worsening daily, a situation characterized by terror, blackmail, banditry and devastation.

This action, whose first objective is to protect humanitarian assistance, must at the same time pave the way for national reconciliation in Somalia and give rise to an international effort to rebuild that country. For that reason the operation we have just authorized can only be carried out on an ad hoc basis; it should not reduce or overshadow the laudable role of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), which must still achieve the objectives set by the Security Council in its relevant resolutions.

At the time when the new Force is about to be set up, let us not forget to hail the courage and self-sacrifice of all the United Nations personnel and humanitarian organizations on the spot, and stress the absolute need to ensure, by all means, adequate protection so that they may be able to discharge their noble mission in the right conditions.

By authorizing this urgent and exceptional operation, the Security Council is responding to the expectations of the international community as a whole, particularly those of the Arab, African and Muslim community to which my country belongs.

Morocco voted without hesitation in favour of resolution 794 (1992), which reflects our concerns and advocates and authorizes appropriate action,

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

which my country fully supports. I therefore take this opportunity to state that the Kingdom of Morocco has decided to take an active part in this operation.

In conclusion, we express the hope that the Council will ensure the immediate implementation of this resolution so that we may be able, firmly and vigorously, to meet the challenge with which we are faced.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Morocco for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. ERDOS (Hungary) (interpretation from French): Having been in your seat last month, Mr. President, I am particularly aware of how much the success of the presidency depends on the cooperation of all other members of the Council. Consequently, I for my part would like, not only to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council, but also to assure you of my delegation's fullest cooperation during the term of your presidency.

It is with increased attention that the international community as a whole has been following recently the efforts made and initiatives taken by the United Nations to deal with the exceptionally serious and extraordinary situation that has come about in Somalia. That international action, thanks, among other things, to the important offers made, by a number of States Members of the United Nations, has today led to the adoption of resolution 794 (1992), which can rightly be considered to be of fundamental importance in the life of the United Nations, in that it opens up the possibility of joint, determined and innovative action by which it will be possible to put an end to the hardship of an entire people and to the dangers that are threatening it with extermination.

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

The Security Council today has demonstrated that it is quite possible and feasible to adapt to the realities of the world of today and to undertake an international operation that will make it possible to carry out wide-scale and extraordinary humanitarian actions. In adopting this resolution, the United Nations can take pride in action that might provide inspiration and guidelines to be followed in the future, as well.

In the light of the operation in Somalia upon which we are about to embark, it seems to us that it will be even more difficult, confronted with world public opinion, for the international community to avoid its responsibility to meet the challenges arising in hotbeds of crisis as serious as the one that is continuing to tear Somalia apart.

We are pleased that this new type of action has been planned and formulated in such a way as to establish an organic link with our world Organization. It also demonstrates how far the United Nations has come since adopting resolution 678 (1990) on the Gulf crisis. The distance we have covered eloquently demonstrates the more effective and dynamic role the United Nations can play in the creation of a new international environment.

It is particularly important that international action in Somalia should not stop at the attainment of the immediate objective, which is to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the civilian population. This action must be accompanied and followed up without delay by efforts to establish conditions that can ensure not only the survival of the Somali people, but also the restoration and political reconstruction of that country and the restoration by the Somalis themselves of the usual functioning of that State Member of the United Nations.

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

The world Organization, consistent with its purposes and principles, has an obligation to participate fully in this difficult undertaking and to give full assistance to the settlement of the urgent problems that are continuing to tear Somalia apart.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of India.

Somalia today poses a unique challenge to the international community, resulting from a combination of factors. Internecine fighting between clans and their factions, compounded by the easy availability of arms in the hands of irregular groups, has turned Somalia into a country without a Government. The tragedy of the Somali people is being further exacerbated, as the Secretary-General has pointed out in his letter of 29 November, by the failure of various factions to cooperate with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and by the extortion, blackmail and robbery to which the international relief effort is subjected. Repeated attacks on personnel and equipment of the United Nations and other relief agencies have further worsened the situation. My Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, who visited Somalia in mid-1992, has seen for himself the gravity of the tragedy that faces Somalia today.

Resolution 794 (1992), which we have just adopted, recognizes the uniqueness of the Somali crisis. The rapidly deteriorating complex and extraordinary situation, with no Government in control, demands an immediate and exceptional response from the international community. The Secretary-General, in full consciousness of his responsibilities, communicated

(The President)

his considered view to the Council that it is now exceedingly difficult for UNOSOM under its present mandate to achieve the objectives approved by the Council for Somalia. He recommended that it has now become necessary to review the basic premises and principles of the United Nations effort. All the members of the Council fully supported his view.

The Secretary-General put forward five well-considered options for the future course of action. Consistent with the position that the Indian delegation has had the opportunity to express on several occasions in the Council, my delegation favoured the fifth option, that is, for a country-wide enforcement operation in Somalia with the aim of creating conditions in which relief supplies can be effectively delivered to those in need, an operation carried out under United Nations command and control.

(The President)

We noted the Secretary-General's view that in that case the Secretariat would need to be strengthened for such command and control to be exercised effectively. My delegation believes that given political will, such arrangements could be possible without too much difficulty. Therefore, in the light of the positions taken by the United States, whose generous offer to contribute in a major way to this effort, as also that of France and Morocco today, we acknowledge, my delegation had favoured an arrangement under which the United Nations would keep effective political command and control while leaving enough flexibility for the contributing States to retain on the ground the operational autonomy they had requested and which was understandable, given the circumstances. We are gratified that the views of the non-aligned members of the Council on this important point have been accommodated to a considerable extent in the resolution. Consequently, the language of paragraphs 10, 12 and 19 of the resolution approaches this position much better than the language of these paragraphs in the first version of the draft. My delegation can go along with the resolution, particularly keeping in view the urgent and compelling need for determined and speedy action.

The present action should not, however, set a precedent for the future. We would expect that, should situations arise in the future requiring action under Chapter VII, it would be carried out in full conformity with the Charter provisions and in the spirit of the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace". It would also be consistent, as the Secretary-General's letter notes, with the recent expansion of the Organization's role in the maintenance of international peace and security and with its long-term evolution as an effective system of collective security. The United Nations, in the

(The President)

post-cold-war era, can surely take on this responsibility, and it is our hope that Member States will develop the necessary political will and confidence in the Organization so that they will be able to contribute to and participate in full-scale United Nations operations.

Resolution 794 (1992) represents only one urgent aspect of the international community's efforts in Somalia. In parallel, as the Secretary-General has pointed out, there must also be action to promote national reconciliation and thus remove the main factors that have created the humanitarian emergency. The present precisely defined operation is to prepare the way for a return to peace-keeping and reconciliation and reconstruction efforts in the future.

The United Nations has major tasks before it. My delegation hopes that all factions in Somalia will extend their cooperation to the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, for the sake of the country which, in the ultimate analysis, is their own. History - certainly the Somali people - will not forgive them if they do not seize the present opportunity.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

There are no further names on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.